

## Myanmar - Volunteers Entered

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
Monday, 05 May 2008 00:00

---

On May 10, Tzu Chi volunteers entered Myanmar for the first time in the history of the foundation's international relief work. The country was severely ravaged by Cyclone Nargis on May 2. Half of its population was affected by the natural disaster, with over a hundred thousand people dead or missing and several million people displaced.



After entering the country, the relief team was divided into three groups, and each was given a different task. The first group communicated with local government authorities for permission to carry out the relief work; the second group inspected conditions in the disaster areas to formulate an appropriate relief plan; the third group took care of the logistics. Overcoming various obstacles along the way, volunteers were finally able to carry out aid distributions on May 15, 17, and 21. Lin Shu-hua (林淑華), the first local Tzu Chi volunteer, played an important role in expediting the relief process.

The distribution on May 15 was held in Shwebaukan, a suburb of Yangon. Aid supplies including water buckets, flashlights, batteries, insect repellent, soap, raincoats, beans, and cooking oil were distributed to 225 families.

Two more relief distributions were held on May 17 in Nyaung Thong Pin, about 40 minutes by car southeast of Yangon. The first distribution was held at Master Uninkathaya's Buddhist temple, and the second at a Hindu temple. On this day, a total of 907 families benefited from the distributions, with each family receiving rice, cooking oil, red beans, and salt.

The distribution on May 21 was conducted at a place 45 minutes northeast of Yangon. A total of 1,879 households, or 8,000 people, received relief supplies, including instant noodles and rice.

In a true display of the Tzu Chi spirit of "gratitude, respect, and love," volunteers gave the relief items directly to the recipients and followed with a bow to thank the victims for giving them the chance to help and thus create good karma in the world. Tzu Chi volunteers will continue to provide help for the victims in the future.